

# INSIDE OUT

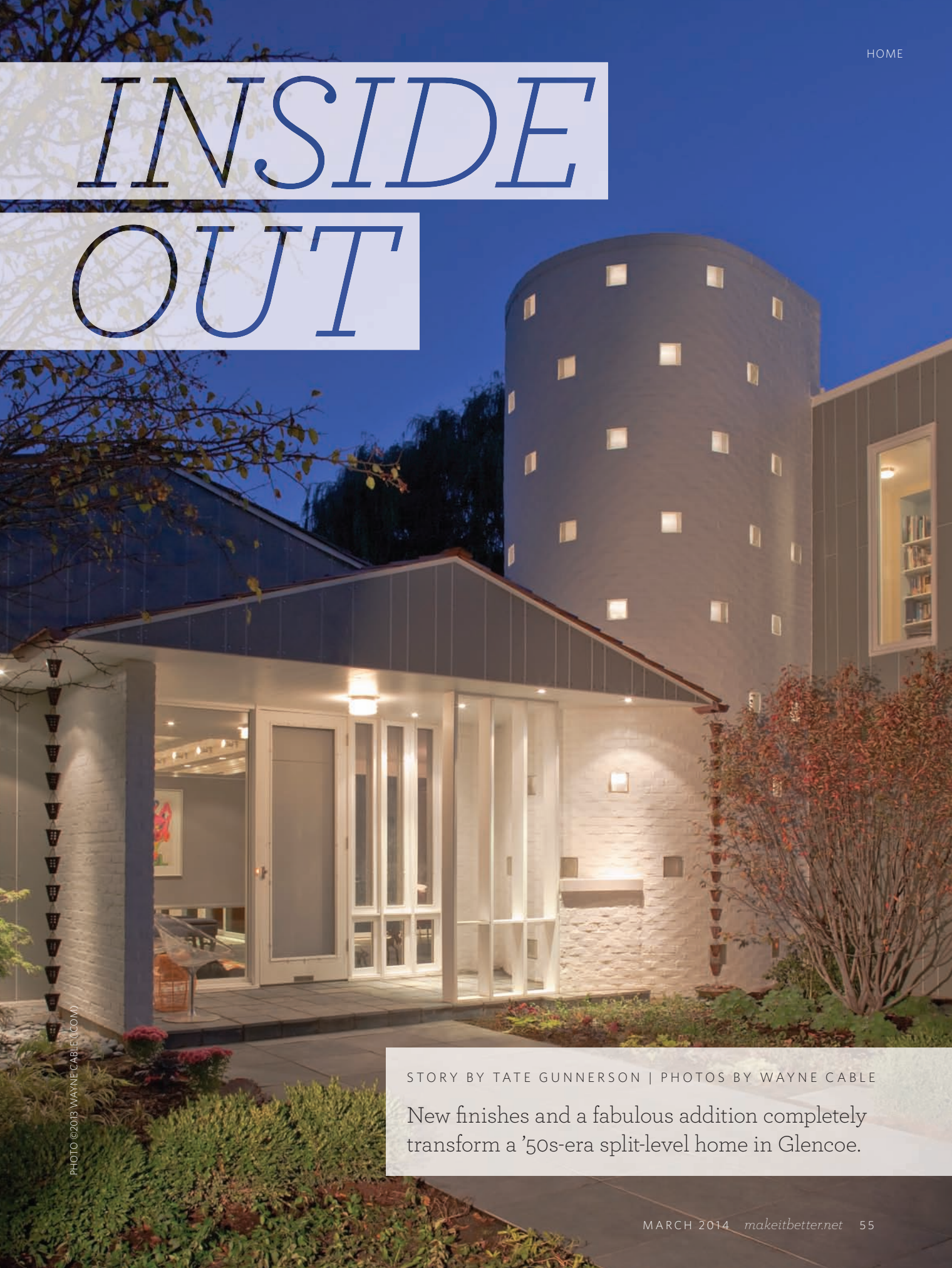


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STORY BY TATE GUNNERSON | PHOTOS BY WAYNE CABLE

New finishes and a fabulous addition completely transform a '50s-era split-level home in Glencoe.



To blur the distinction between interior and exterior, Kipnis lined up the gravel ground covering with the home's overhang and had the bluestone pavers cut and laid in the same dimension as the interior slate floor. The curved brick wall conceals a seating area; solar panels reduce energy consumption.

"I WALKED IN AND FELT like I could breathe," says Nancy Newberger of her '50s-era home in Glencoe. Newberger bought the split-level two years after she and her husband divorced. While the house was dated and smaller than she envisioned, Newberger loved its mid-century architecture and light-filled rooms, and she looked forward to making it her own. "I had all this pent-up desire to remodel, and I didn't have to compromise on any of the decisions," Newberger says. "It was all mine."

Acting on a referral, Newberger interviewed and ultimately hired architect Nathan Kipnis, of Kipnis Architecture + Planning, to design the renovation and create an addition. "There was kind of an unfortunate renovation from the '90s with a lot of mirrors and other details typical of that time period," Kipnis recalls. His plan called for demolishing the original garage and replacing it with a new one that includes a newly dug basement and a second-floor guest suite that can be accessed by a circular tower with a spiral staircase. "The tower would have been right at home in the '50s," Kipnis says, noting that it was inspired by an unusual serpentine brick wall that was original to the home.

The tower's small square windows glow at night, which gives the home a stronger street presence. So does the new cement-fiberboard siding, which is composed of a variety of standard sizes that Kipnis designed to give the appearance of a random pattern. "The siding lines up subtly with things around the building," Kipnis says, pointing to the way its horizontal joints align with windows and other architectural details. "These mid-century modern homes have a geometric basis to their design, and that's really a fun thing to pick up on."

Indeed, Kipnis' design also uses geometry to blur the boundaries between the interior and exterior. In one area, the exterior siding continues into the interi-



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In the living room, Kipnis had the original single-glazed, untempered glass windows replaced with safer, more efficient ones. The soft gray wall color changes throughout the day with the sunlight. "Every 10 minutes the room looks a little different," Kipnis says. "The goal of the living room is to bring the outside in."



or; the joints of the bluestone patio tile were installed to align with the existing slate-tile floor in the living room. Even the ductwork has been concealed in interior soffits that line up with those outside the house. "The idea is to make the space look bigger," Kipnis explains. "To some extent, this makes the walls disappear."

Many of the improvements are invisible to the naked eye. Windows were replaced throughout the house with an eye toward efficiency. New insulation was added, as were solar panels for hot water, and

later, a photovoltaic system that Newberger estimates saves her 30 percent on energy costs. "Fossil fuels are finite, and I feel that it's irresponsible not to use other forms of energy that are available," she says.

According to Newberger, the project was actually fun. "There was no spouse to deal with, so I didn't have to compromise. It was very freeing to make those decisions by myself," she says. "It's a flexible space. I'm as comfortable when I'm alone as I am when there are seven of us in the house." ■